

Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Formica, Representative Ziobron, and members of the Appropriations Committee; thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony.

I am writing to you today with great concern regarding Section 48 (T1854) and Section 58 (T1938) of H.B. 7027. This is an attack on Connecticut gun owners and I urge that you **OPPOSE** Section 48 (T1854) and Section 58 (T1938) of H.B. 7027 that would support the Governor's proposed pistol permit rate increase.

Governor Malloy is proposing that the fees for obtaining and renewing pistol permits be increased astronomically. Currently, it costs \$140 for an applicant to obtain a pistol permit. This permit is valid for five years and can then be renewed for \$70. Governor Malloy is proposing increasing the initial fee to \$340 and then every five years renewal for \$300.

This proposal is unacceptable. Governor Malloy has no love lost for gun owners here in Connecticut. It is quite obvious that the Governor is using this opportunity to try and punish and further restrict gun owners here in Connecticut. The governor is proposing increasing fees more than 400% in order to try and price citizens out of gun ownership. He is letting his personal feelings interfere with actually doing his job and proposing a budget that will actually fix the problems the state is currently facing.

If this budget passed with this proposal intact, the results would be detrimental. Low income individuals who seek to acquire a firearm for their protection as well as the protection of their families would have to face a big financial burden in order to do so. People on a fixed income may not be able to afford \$300 to renew their permit thus leaving them without the ability to carry, buy ammunition to practice, or buy new firearms. People with illnesses may have to choose between paying medical bills or being able to protect themselves and the ones they love. Already the cost of obtaining a permit is high when one factors in the cost of training, the actual cost of a firearm and ammunition. It is already difficult for some people to obtain what may be the one thing that someday saves their life or the lives of their loved ones.

This proposal is backdoor gun control. With the increases, lower income people may forgo obtaining a firearm to protect themselves and others. A whole segment of the population here in Connecticut will be priced out of a right. The United States is not a country where only the wealthy are able to have rights. Rights are afforded to anyone not only those who can buy them. This proposal undermines this very principle.

Governor Malloy cites an increase in permit applications as the reason for the increase in fees. More and more Connecticut citizens are seeking permits so that they may exercise their constitutionally guaranteed right to bear arms. The Governor's proposal makes mention that efforts in 2013 to restrict gun ownership here in Connecticut are to blame for this increase in demand on the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection. It is ridiculous that the Governor wants Connecticut gun owners to bear the burden of a law that gun owners

turned out in droves to oppose. Gun owners lost a lot when the gun ban bill was passed in 2013 and yet some people like the Governor seem to think we should lose even more.

We currently pay more than enough (some, as would I, say we pay too much) to exercise a right already protected through the 2nd Amendment to the United States Constitution. Some do not see why gun owners are upset at further costs and regulations. Imagine for a second that this law was about a different right. What would happen if you needed a \$300 permit every year in order to exercise your First Amendment rights? People would be outraged and opposed as they should be. Legislators need to put aside their personal feelings about firearms and view this in that type of way. The Governor has been unable to do this and that is why gun owners are faced yet again with more costs and regulations.

I hope that I can count on you to see this proposal for what it really is and oppose this part of Governor Malloy's opposed budget. Gun owners should not be punished because the state has made poor financial decisions in the past. The Governor needs to stop trying to balance the state budget on the backs of those he disagrees with. I urge that you **OPPOSE** Section 48 (T1854) and Section 58 (T1938) of H.B. 7027 that would support the Governor's proposed pistol permit rate increase.

Thank you for your consideration,

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